

5/2/86

Dear Albert + Richard

Thank you for "Beyond Single Attack..."

Although I remain madder than yourselves, I do find your arguments persuasive. At the very least, I agree that to deter a controlled nuclear attack we need credible preparations to fight back at less than suicidally provocative levels. And I agree that pure irrationality cannot be deterred.

I also support your operational ³ recommendations.

(P.S. I have been a steady ARPANET user for over ¹⁰ years.)

- ① On controlled attack and response: how do you reconcile your expectations that ^{their} our leaders will make such cool, correctly calculated judgments with the repeated failure of judgment that you so often criticize?
- ② Have you worked out a detailed scenario or wargame:
e.g. the Soviets destroy our coast-based expeditionary force with a limited attack. What does the President then do?
What do they do....
Isn't ^{it} the risk (if not the certainty) of escalation to MAD that deters the first step?

I agree we still need some capability of responding to salami-slicing. My fear is that it may be easier more publicly, in "demonstrations" (as I have heard Ken Adelman say), and so on.

I offer no good answers. Perhaps you have some clarity to share with me via the scenarios I asked for. I have some glimmers that there is room to work out threat-bargaining techniques for some extenuates, e.g. that the threat of using nuclear attack ~~is~~ for a desperate but limited objective like extricating a U.S. ~~division~~ division from a Khe Sanh-like predicament in the Gulf might lead to a negotiated settlement of a conventional conflict. These kinds of confrontations are not likely to be resolved by unilateral victory. So in the right setting, the risk of escalating to MAD, and a capability for flexible response, may organize the environment to save cities as the last ^{coercive} of violence and confrontation that both sides will hazard. C³I - survivability from becomes terribly important to negotiate such settlements. In the interval of

limited objectives this is also incentive to not decapitate.

* Should we think of measures to prevent accidental or inadvertent decapitation?

J

Do you make explicit that there is little
need for precise Σ^3 I survivability after
Bombs?

(* including rhetorical)

- ② Much/most of that negotiation is within our own side,
e.g. to enforce an armistice. Hence the Σ^3 imperative: